

# Community News

## Contractor volunteers receive ‘Heart of the Community Awards’

*Volunteer Center lauds business cooperation*

Four JSC contractors took home “Heart of the Community” awards this week for giving back to the community.

The Volunteer Center of the Texas Gulf Coast, Bay Area Satellite Center, presented the awards in a special presentation at South Shore Harbour Resort to GHG Corp.; Lockheed Martin Science, Engineering and Analysis; MRI Computer Services and Northrop Grumman Corp. The companies were honored for their work on either a special project or for continued support throughout the year.

“The growing desire of our local companies to seek and to develop and restore the human spirit through volunteerism is a profound example of ‘heart’ in the community,” said Kathleen Holt, director of the Bay Area Satellite Office of the Houston Volunteer Center. “Bay Area businesses give, and in giving, make a life of value for their employees and a life of hope for those who are the recipients of their generosity.”

GHG Corp., received its special project award for repairing the home of a League City widow. Employees spent more than 220 hours renovating the home and removing unsafe and unsanitary conditions in the yard.

Northrop Grumman Corp., also received a special project award for its partnership with James F. Bay Elementary School in Seabrook.

Twenty-one volunteers tutored “at risk” students, spending at least one hour per week from October through April. These volunteers logged more than 2,200 hours of tutoring. Since the program began, grade scores have improved, affirming the success of the program.

“By tutoring students at Bay Elementary, your company exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism,” Holt said. “By helping nonprofit agencies, your organization has distinguished itself as a leader in contributing to the welfare of our community.”

MRI Computer Services received an overall “Heart of the Community Award” for its contributions to community charities and educational organizations. The company provided financial support to the YMCA, Boy Scouts of America and scouting for the disabled. Throughout the year, MRI Computer Services are active in food drives, charity runs, and youth services in local schools.

“I commend you for your leadership in empowering your employees to make an impact on the problems facing your community,” wrote Robert Goodwin, president of the Points of Light Foundation to MRI Computer Services. “Together we can make a connection through community service—a powerful force—to bridge the differences that divide us: to remind all Americans of what we can accomplish when we work together and to get things done

for the next generation.”

GHG Corp., also received an overall award for its efforts around the Bay Area. Employees have collected clothing, food, toys and household items for the disadvantaged. During the holidays, volunteers package and deliver gift bags to children. GHG also provides 120 free Internet accounts to non-profit organizations.

Lockheed Martin Science Engineering and Analysis was recognized for their efforts to target hunger, homeless and juvenile crime. Volunteers have built wheelchair ramps, picnic tables and repaired playground equipment at youth centers. Employees have worked bi-monthly in soup kitchens preparing food and have walked for the March of Dimes. More than 700 employees donate 2,000 hours to various company sponsored community service activities.

“Lockheed has given their heart as a positive influence in the lives of lonely children housed at the Harris County Youth Village in Seabrook,” said Joy Mills, coordinator of Crossroads. “This detention center has active Lockheed volunteers. They make a real difference in the lives of neglected youth.”

In addition to the JSC contractor, Sterling Chemicals of Texas City and Weststar Construction of League City also took home the special award.



Above: Sal Anguiano of DynCorp uses a respirator while spray painting. Left: Keith Arnone of BRSP protects his respiratory system while handling hazardous chemicals. JSC’s Environmental Health Services Office says employees might be required to use a respirator in maintenance operations that liberate dusts, mists, fumes, vapors or gases. In areas that employees must process, handle, store or dispose of substances that could result in exposures over the OSHA permissible exposure limits, employees should wear protection.

## Respirators can help prevent lung disease

By Julie Stone

August has been designated respiratory protection awareness month and JSC’s Environmental Health Office has tips for employees to help protect their respiratory system while on the job.

“In most industries today, under normal operating conditions, there are few routine manufacturing tasks that require the use of respiratory protection,” said Gary Caylor, JSC’s occupational health officer. “Achieving employee protection through the use of engineering controls, well-designed work practices, the use of materials with lower toxicities, administrative controls, or some combination of these is more practical and cost-effective.”

Steve Hulka, a certified industrial hygienist in the Environmental Health Services Office said that

employees might be required to use a respirator in maintenance operations that liberate dusts, mists, fumes, vapors or gases.

If respiratory protection must be used for any activity, a written respiratory protection program must be developed and implemented, as required by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s Respiratory Protection Standard 29 CFR 1910.134.

“An effective respiratory protection program requires careful planning and diligent execution,” Caylor said. “There’s no room for guesswork when the health and safety of employees are at stake.”

Employees who don’t have a program and would like to receive information on how to implement one, May contact the Environmental Health Services Office at x36726.

## Government travel services to be consolidated agencywide this month

On Aug. 30, American Express Travel Related Services, Inc., will be providing travel services for all NASA centers including JSC.

The acquisition of this new contract was led by Goddard Space Flight Center in accordance with a lead center agreement, which transferred responsibility for acquisition, operations and management of the agency-wide travel services contract from NASA Headquarters to Goddard.

The Transportation Branch is handling the transition to ensure travelers continue receiving the highest quality of service,” said Jim

Hickmon, director of Center Operations. “Bobby Boyd and Rose Gardner-DeLapp will be responsible for the transition at JSC and the White Sands Test Facility.”

Services to be provided by American Express Travel include air, rail and hotel reservations; car rental reservations; passport/visa processing; seminar/conference arrangements; bus arrangements and more. When travel assistance is needed, employees may contact an American Express Travel representative using the same telephone numbers at JSC.

The new contract is a perfor-

mance based contract with an incentive rebate structure. Performance standards will be incorporated into the contract and carefully monitored, Hickmon said. Travelers and travel arrangers will periodically receive written and/or telephone surveys asking to assess the quality of service. Focus groups and a performance assessment board also will be used to assess performance.

For more information call Boyd at x36526 or Gardner-DeLapp at x30331. White Sands employees may contact Vernon Brown at (505) 524-5134 for information.

## NASA bowling season to begin

The NASA Mixed Bowling League 1997-98 season will begin on Aug. 26 and run until May 5.

The league, which currently bowls at 6 p.m. on Tuesday evenings at Alpha Bowl on Bay Area Blvd., has a split season with two 17-week

halves. The winners of each half of the season bowl in a play-off to determine first and second place. Last season the league was comprised of 16 teams with five bowlers per team. For more information, contact Leona Kain, at 281-282-2544.

## Thermal, fluids workshop set for September at UHCL

The eighth annual thermal and fluids analysis workshop will be held from Sept. 8-11 at the University of Houston- Clear Lake.

The purpose of the workshop is to bring together members of industry, academia and government to share information and exchange ideas about applications of analysis tools and methods.

On Monday, Sept. 8, after opening registration, Steven Rifai from Centric Engineering Systems Inc., will discuss “Multiphysics Simulation of Coupled Fluid and Thermal and Structural Analysis on High Performance Parallel Computing Platforms.”

Fluids seminars will be conducted from 8-11:30 a.m. Tuesday and Wednesday and 8-11 a.m. Thursday. Thermal seminars will be conducted from 1-4 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Special training sessions also will be available. General Aerodynamics Simulation Program training will be held from 1-5 p.m. Monday and Tuesday. Systems Improved Numerical

Differing Analyzer training and SINAPS Plus training will be from 8 a.m.-noon Tuesday and Wednesday. Thermal Synthesizer System training will be from 1-5 p.m. on Wednesday and 8 a.m.-noon on Thursday. Parabolic Hyperbolic or Elliptic Numerically Integrated Code Series training will be from 1-5 p.m. Wednesday and 1-4:30 p.m. Thursday.

The cost of the series is \$25 for students and \$350 for all non-government individuals. This price includes continental breakfast, lunches and dinner program as well as all classroom materials. Registration is due by Aug. 22. Registration will be accepted after that date on a first come, first served basis at an increased cost: \$30 for students and \$450 for all others.

JSC civil service employees may contact Glen VanZandt at x33069 to register. Employees must register before Aug. 22 to attend. For more information contact Carlos Ortiz, conference chairman, x38879 or e-mail: crortiz@ems.jsc.nasa.gov.

JSC Safety Alert

### Uninterruptible Power Source Battery Failure

#### What Happened

Operations personnel in a test and training facility reported hearing a loud bang followed by the alarm on the Uninterruptible Power Source self-monitoring system.

#### Outcome of Investigation

It was determined, after the Uninterruptible Power Source chassis access panel was removed, that one out of the 20 batteries had experienced an explosive rupture. The battery had apparently been allowed to dry out in most, if not all, of its cells. This dry state allowed a large ullage volume to form inside the battery over the remaining liquid electrolyte. This volume created a condition within the battery in which hydrogen gas, a normal by-product of these batteries, was able to collect and form an explosive mixture. Hydrogen gas is a very explosive and easily ignitable gas. The Uninterruptible Power Source owner's manual did not require that the fluid levels be checked. The facility performed a biannual battery test as part of its preventative maintenance program.

#### What You Can Do

Uninterruptible Power Source systems are devices that can vary greatly in size and complexity. Some use solid state batteries, gel-acid types and others use the liquid-acid type. Facility users of Uninterruptible Power Source systems should assure that the systems remain in good working order. Facility representatives should review Uninterruptible Power Source manuals to determine the types of batteries used, and their required preventative maintenance. Steps should be taken to determine the condition of the batteries if they are subject to electrolyte depletion and hydrogen gas generation. The levels should be checked if the batteries are of the lead-acid type with removable caps for fluid addition. Maintenance-free batteries should be reviewed for service life constraints. Don't assume that they will operate indefinitely. These batteries degrade over time and should be replaced. Consult your Uninterruptible Power Source vendor or manufacturer for the recommended maintenance and replacement schedule.